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C O N F I D E N T I A L ANKARA 000972

SIPDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (SUBJECT ADDED)  
DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/SE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/07/2008

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SUBJECT: MFA BLAMES WEATHER FOR OCALAN'S ISOLATION, CLAIMS  
EFFORT TO RESOLVE PROBLEM.

REF: ADANA 44

Classified by Polcouns John Kunstadter; reasons 1.5 b and d.

1. (C) Further to Reftel, Poloff February 7 discussed the lack of attorney/family access to jailed PKK/KADEK leader Abdullah Ocalan with Kaan Esener, head of the MFA's Department of Council of Europe Affairs. Esener claimed that a series of mechanical failures and high seas have grounded the ferry that shuttles visitors every Wednesday to Imrali Island in the Sea of Marmara, where Ocalan is the only prisoner. Ocalan last received visitors November 27. "None of Ocalan's attorneys or relatives" had been denied permission to visit. MFA is concerned about Ocalan's isolation, and the strong reaction it has evoked in the southeast. MFA officials have contacted their counterparts in the Justice and Interior ministries and urged them to find a way to arrange a visit as soon as possible.

2. (C) In response to a question, Esener said he is aware of rumors that Ocalan is dead, but said Justice Ministry officials have assured MFA that Ocalan is in good health.  
PEARSON